



Teacher and Principal of the Year

2025-2026

The Louisiana Department of Education in partnership with [Dream Teachers](#) and the [Louisiana Association of Principals](#), recognizes and celebrates some of the state's most exceptional educators through the Teacher and Principal of the Year programs. These programs provide an opportunity to acknowledge those teachers and leaders who are making exceptional gains with students. Their commitment to student success exemplifies Louisiana's teaching profession.

Selection Process and Timeline

- **Nomination Portal Opens**
 - September 2 - 30, 2025
 - The nominations portal is open from September 2 - September 30.
 - Upon portal close, the nomination information is shared with school systems.
- **Application Release**
 - October 1, 2025
 - The Department releases Teacher and Principal of the Year application materials for the 2025-2026 school year.
- **Informational Overview Calls for Candidates and Stakeholders**
 - October 2025 - January 2026
 - To assist candidates, coordinators and stakeholders with the application process, informational calls and help desk calls will be conducted. On these calls, information will be shared about the applications/timeline/process, as well as steps for using the online portals.
- **State-level Applications Due**
 - January 14, 2026
 - School systems may select up to three teachers and three principals (one for elementary, middle and high) to move to the state competition.
 - By January 14, state candidates are to submit their application in the Teacher and Principal of the Year candidate's online application portal.
- **Semifinalists Announced**
 - March TBD, 2026
 - The Department names the 48 Teacher and Principal of the Year semifinalists (24 teachers and 24 principals.)
- **Finalists Announced**

- May TBD, 2026
- The Department names the 18 Teacher and Principal of the Year finalists (9 teachers and 9 principals.)
- **Teacher Leader Summit**
 - May 26 - 28, 2026
 - All semifinalists and finalists will receive a VIP ticket.
- **Finalist Interviews**
 - June TBD, 2026
 - State selection committees (composed of community and education leaders) conduct virtual interviews with the 18 finalists.
- **Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala**
 - July 25, 2026
 - The 2027 Teacher and Principal of the Year semifinalists and finalists will be recognized and celebrated at the 20th Annual Cecil J. Picard Educator Excellence Awards Gala that will be held in New Orleans.
 - On this evening the division-level and overall honorees will be named.
 - This exciting event is co-sponsored by [Dream Teachers](#).

For questions regarding the Louisiana Teacher and Principal of the Year Award programs, please contact excellenteducators@la.gov.